

CDSS TRIBAL ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

Tribal Consultation Policy (TCP) – The TCP guides government-to-government consultation between the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) and California Indian Tribes (Tribes) on policies and procedures that affect Tribes and Indians in California, in recognition of statutory mandates and Federal and State Executive Directives to establish a formal government-to-government TCP. For further details see [CDSS TCP](#).

TCP: Delegation of Sovereign Authority - The CDSS TCP requires communication with the Tribal Chairperson or the Chairperson's designee. An individual or organization designated to represent a Tribe in consultation with CDSS is responsible for communicating all relevant information to the Tribe they represent. Because of the government-to-government nature of CDSS consultation with Tribes, information provided to Tribes in the consultation process may be confidential. Any designated tribal consultation representative appears as and for the tribe as a government and is subject to all applicable confidentiality and privacy constraints. Consultation delegation is made on an individual issue or consultation session basis unless explicitly authorized to be in every instance. Acceptable delegation documents are: letter on tribal letterhead from the tribal chair, resolution from the tribal council and emails from the tribal chair's.

Tribal Advisory Committee (TAC) –The committee is established to improve the government-to-government relationships and communication between Tribes and the CDSS. The committee provides advice to the Director of CDSS (Director) about matters of interest or concern to the Tribes and their constituents. The committee has the power to recommend policies or procedures for CDSS. Please see charter and appointment process for details.

All Tribal Leader Letter – An All Tribal Leader Letter process, including Information Notices, will be developed for formal CDSS communications directed to all California Tribal Leaders. The format will reflect decorous government-to-government communications. The Information Notice format will constitute an “executive summary” to accompany all policy letters (such as [ACLs/ACINs/ACWDLs](#)) that directly impact tribes. Information Notices will be sent to Tribal Leaders and a Tribal Stakeholder Review list maintained by the Office of Tribal Affairs (OTA).

Tribal Stakeholder Review – The CDSS engages in a stakeholder review process for feedback on program and policy documents. These items are often policy letters such as All County Letters (ACL) and All County Information Notices (ACIN) that provide guidance to county partners. Also included are reports prepared for federal review like the [Annual Progress & Services Report](#), and the [Child & Family Services Review](#). This process is a standard 10-day time frame to provide comments.

Current CDSS practice includes only Title IV-E Agreement Tribes in stakeholder reviews. The OTA will develop and maintain a broader Tribal Stakeholder list to include tribal social service representatives and others interested in providing technical reviews. The OTA has established a tribal stakeholder review list, and a process for maintaining it. It is the responsibility of tribes to email TribalAffairs@dss.ca.gov to request additions or modifications. The OTA will regularly review the list and request updates from Tribal Governments.

OTA Communications – The OTA will utilize technology to communicate regularly and broadly with California Tribes, tribal organizations, tribal stakeholders, advocates and interested parties to keep our CDSS partners current and informed on topics that could impact Indians and tribal communities in California. The types of methods are below:

- **Email Noticing:** Implementing tribal input, official notices will be sent via email to the Tribal Chairpersons and their explicitly delegated designees. The OTA will maintain a list of Tribal Chairperson emails for purposes of noticing and keep this information confidential. Tribal Chairpersons will only receive high level notices like invitations to tribal consultation, policy/guidance documents for review that directly impact tribes and important OTA communications unless requested to be added to the broader stakeholder list. If the OTA does not have a current email address for Tribal Chairpersons, tribal consultation invitations will be sent via postal mail and all other documents will be posted to the website.
- **Tribal Affairs Page on the CDSS Website:** <http://www.cdss.ca.gov/inforesources/Tribal-Affairs>. The Tribal Affairs page will serve as a gateway into information concerning the CDSS Tribal Consultation Policy, the Tribal Engagement Strategy and CDSS programs and policies impacting Indians and Tribes. It will host OTA bulletins, newsletters and annual reports, as well as training materials such as webinars on programs, laws and policies impacting Indians and Tribes in California. The website update will begin January 2019.
- **Bulletin:** This publication will serve as a digest of information about topics like meetings dates, ACL Review, webinar opportunities, partner stories of interest and other important alerts from CDSS. This document will be high level and brief but contain pertinent information. This method may also be used to disseminate surveys to gather feedback and inputs. The Bulletin will come out as needed and sometimes multiple times a month.
- **Newsletter:** Quarterly, the OTA will seek to develop a newsletter highlighting hot button topics and other important stories. The intent is to familiarize the audience

with the work at the Department and highlight opportunities for tribal engagement.

- ***Annual Report:*** Every year in August the OTA will release an Annual Report to review the tribal affairs efforts made at the Department during the last fiscal year. The OTA will seek to capture milestones, data and reflect on projects that will inform tribal governments and stakeholders of the accomplishments and continued progress in priority areas.